



Richard Holdsworth

Established Professional, Playwriting
Wilmington

Richard Holdsworth's poetry has been published in *Comstock Review*, *Envoi* and *Poetry Ireland Review*. He has given literary performances locally and plans to produce his play, which incorporates poetry into the script, at St. Albans Church in Wilmington this fall. His interfaith prayers and meditations were used in a New Orleans-area hospital ministry immediately following Hurricane Katrina. He has also performed stand-up comedy in bars.

Holdsworth is a graduate of the London School of Economics and Political Science, holds a teaching certificate and came to America to attend a graduate creative writing program at Ohio University. He held various jobs in England, ranging from police constable, youth worker and college teacher. In the United States, he worked as a researcher/writer for a museum, child abuse investigator and trainer and curriculum developer for the Victim Services Agency in New York City. For the past 12 years, he has served as a juvenile probation officer in Wilmington. Recently, he helped initiate the Delaware Bully Prevention Association.

Since early childhood, I have enjoyed writing. I have recently started writing experimental theatrical pieces that reflect my extensive experience working with disadvantaged families. My Life in Crime, Dysfunction and Deviance seeks to capture the pathos, bathos, tragedy and farce of lives that are often chaotic, frequently in crisis, regularly illegal, and never boring. I seek to transcend the limitations of traditional writing disciplines with an innovative, lively collage of poetry, rhyme and prose for voices and chorus with optional sound effects.

I find inspiration in great universal themes from art, theater, literature, and religion. Mundane events, typical human foibles, and my always-encouraging family also motivate me; anything can become a source of creative expression. My philosophy advocates for art as a translucent gateway to universal levels of human understanding.



Jennifer Margaret Barker

Established Professional, Music Composition
Newark

Widely commissioned and performed by choral groups, symphony orchestras, and solo artists, Jennifer Margaret Barker's compositions have been called "gripping and timeless," "haunting," and "toe-tapping." They derive from many influences in her life.

A native of Scotland, Barker graduated from the University of Glasgow with an Honors Bachelor of Music. From Syracuse University, she received a master's in piano performance and a master's in composition, and earned her master's and doctorate in music composition from the University of Pennsylvania, where she attended as a William Penn Fellow. She is Associate Professor of Music Theory/Composition at the University of Delaware, and in addition to teaching and composing, she also performs as a pianist.

Her music has been broadcast on PBS and the BBC, and she has two CDs to her credit. She is currently working on a historical opera based on the life of a Scottish woman.

Having studied composition in Europe and America with composers as diverse as Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies and George Crumb, my compositional output exhibits a variety of influences and techniques. Some of these remained an integral part of my style, while others paid only a fleeting visit. As my own style evolved, I came to acknowledge a handful of unyielding influences: the long melo-

dious lines of Scottish Gaelic song, the ethereal quality of the English cathedral choir tradition, the drama and passion of the great Romantic and early twentieth-century solo piano and chamber works, and the exuberant quirkiness of music theater.

My compositional language is primarily programmatic [i.e., a musical description of something that exists, rather than an abstraction]. My inspiration comes from nature, historical figures, legends and myths from my heritage, poetry, and prose. No matter whether the genre is a solo instrumental work, a chamber work, a choral/vocal work, or a full symphony, my primary interests are color and texture. Furthermore, the musical material for each composition evolves out of the instrumental and vocal choices.

It was with great excitement that I formed a partnership with videographer John Anthony Palmer in 2004. We have explored the creation of videos for classical music, resulting in the May 2005 commercial release of four videos on DVD. Each presents a visual interpretation of the program behind my compositions. This is an art form that I wish to pursue further, as I have already witnessed its success as a bridge to the non-classical music audience.

Some of Barker's compositions will be performed at the University of Delaware's Center for the Arts in Newark on March 10, 8 p.m., and on April 15, 8 p.m. For information, 831-2577.

HARRY: A seasoned social worker

NARRATOR(S): Reader(s) accompanied by a spoken chorus

Harry

My life has been spent in crime, dysfunction and deviance. However my life is not primarily a life of crime, dysfunction and deviance. It is a life *in* crime, dysfunction and deviance. They writhe together with the dubious harmony of perpetual dishonor that is all around me in the lives of those I have served as a Child Protective worker and Juvenile Probation Officer: lives that I can now make known in an anthology of diverting anecdotes, poetical interludes, typical case notes, representative summaries, classic court reports and personal opinions.

Pause

Perhaps the most alarming recent trend that I have encountered is the way in which kids are becoming increasingly involved in the criminal justice system at very young ages.

Narrators

(Sing-song to the count of 10)

Three little city girls
Leap around a broken tree
Clapping hands
-1-2-3-4
Back flip down a trashed-out alley;
-5-6-7-8
See a cop; giggle, flee
-9-10, start again

Three rowdy third-grade girls
Rap inside the schoolyard
High five
-1-2-3-4
Shout, fight, laugh with glee
-5-6-7-8
Chase a friendly boy away
-9-10, run, run

Three cute criminals
Sit and sniff in Family Court;
Handcuffed wrists
-1-2-3-4
Legs too short to reach the floor
-5-6-7-8
Took a gun to the candy store
-9-10, bang, bang

Excerpt from *My Life in Crime, Dysfunction and Deviance*
by Richard Holdsworth